

Jody Simpson

From: Christy Kramer [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 04, 2021 5:10 PM
To: Sen. David Wilson
Subject: SB 56

Senator Wilson,

I am writing to you to express my support of SB 56. As a nurse practitioner working in the intensive care unit, I see first hand how important this bill is to Alaskans. An extension of the public health disaster declaration will continue to allow for essential health care to be delivered during the pandemic. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Best regards,

Christine Kramer
[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99516

Sent from my iPhone

Jody Simpson

From: Toby Currin <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 04, 2021 6:57 PM
To: Sen. David Wilson
Subject: SB56 endorsement

Dear Senator Wilson,

I wanted to add my name to the list of residents and physicians who are asking you to pass SB56 to ensure we can continue to provide the best care to our residents. As a hospitalist in anchorage as well as a hospitalist/primary care provider for the Norton sound region, not passing SB56 would greatly impact our delivery of effective safe care. Fortunately there have been gains in our fight against the pandemic but unfortunately we still have a ways to go with likely some unforeseen challenges ahead that we need to be ready for with these systems already in place.

Thank you for your time and consideration Toby Currin, DO

Sent from my iPhone

Jody Simpson

From: Mike's Email <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 04, 2021 8:41 PM
To: Sen. Lora Reinbold; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Shelley Hughes; Sen. David Wilson; Sen. Tom Begich; Michael Mraz
Subject: Please support SB56

Re: Please Support SB 56!!!!

To Senators Wilson, Hughes, Begich, Costello, Reinbold.

Dear Esteemed Senators,

I am a physician in Anchorage and have been working as a Hospitalist for about 9 years with The Alaska Hospitalist Group (TAHG). Prior to this, I worked in Nome at Norton Sound Health Corporation and Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center.

My colleagues and I are part of the frontline team taking care of hospitalized patients in Anchorage, Mat Su, And Soldotna including those Covid 19 Patients sick enough to be hospitalized in Alaska .

It has been unbelievably challenging at times and I acknowledge we have thankfully not been as horribly effected as some areas of the country. This is almost certainly related to aggressive public health measures established early on.

Things have been bad but could have been, and still could be, much much worse.

The pandemic is not over. There is still much work to be done.

We need to stay vigilant.

We need to get more vaccinated people .

We need your continued support and help.

It's terrifying to me what happened this week at a large seafood processing plant. Nearly half of the people there were infected with covid 19 despite the seemingly aggressive quarantine policies in place in that industry.

The health care system of Alaska is fragile as complicated given the rural communities. We can not handle a major surge especially without the extension of the public health emergency declaration.

Literally, Lives and livelihoods depend on the support you give to SB 56.

Please please please extend the public health emergency declaration through September 30th, 2021.

Sincerely,

Michael Mraz MD
TAHG , Inpatient hospitalist in Anchorage



Jody Simpson

From: Sharolyn Baldwin <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 04, 2021 9:24 PM
To: Sen. Lora Reinbold; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Tom Begich;
Senator.Shelly.Hughes@akleg.gov; Sen. David Wilson
Subject: SB 56-I support it!

Senators-

I am writing to ask you support for SB 56.

I have provided front-line inpatient care to COVID patients since the beginning of the pandemic. Both the care required for these patients and trying to meet care needs of others during an unprecedented moment in history has required rapid change to meet emerging/often unpredictable demands. The flexibility provided by the emergency disaster declaration has been vital to maintaining critical responses and providing excellent care to all Alaskans. **I strongly support SB 56, which extends the existing public health disaster declaration issued by the Governor on January 15, 2021 to September 30, 2021.**

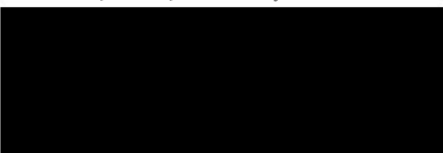
In particular, although I personally do not see patients remotely/via telemedicine platforms, I believe that continuing to permit vulnerable populations to receive services via Telehealth is vital to their protection. I also firmly believe that care facilities need to preserve their ability to be flexible with physical environments for at least the next several months- both of which would be protected by extension of the emergency order.

I am so very proud to call Alaska home. I am also very proud of our collective response to the pandemic. We have leveraged both community and individual responsibility in ways that are truly, uniquely Alaskan. I look forward to widespread vaccine availability and a day when we tell our young interns about what it was like to live through a pandemic of a disease we almost never see anymore. It would be such a shame to falter in this, the last (long) mile of a hard-won battle.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Sharolyn H. Baldwin, MD, FACP
Alaskan, Wife, Mother, USAF veteran



Eagle River, AK

Jody Simpson

From: Elizabeth Dahl <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 3:01 AM
To: Elizabeth Dahl
Subject: Support Senate Bill 56

Dear Senate Health and Social Services Committee:

I am a contact tracer for our state. I wholeheartedly support passage of Senate Bill 56 which enables continuation of the state's Covid-19 Public Health Emergency declaration.

In fact, I would like to see it amended to be valid through January 30, 2022 so there will be no gap should the current Pandemic situation continue to warrant the bill's need while the Legislature is not in session.

As you know, several of the state's health outbreak orders regarding travel, the seafood industry, healthcare, and essential workers have been integral to limiting the spread.

In spite of the arrival of the vaccine, it is predicted Alaska's future Covid-19 case numbers will rise again with the onset of in-person school, summer fish season and tourism. Nonetheless we are already encountering recovered Alaskan's that have become re-infected.

If you personally are not in favor of this legislation, I ask you to set those reservations aside in committee, move the bill forward and allow your opposition to be known on the Senate floor during a whole Senate vote.

Please don't let politics influence Public Health decisions or make an already difficult situation become more complicated. Be a part of the solution, not an obstruction to Alaska managing this critical public health emergency.

Thank you for listening,
Elizabeth Dahl
Juneau, Alaska

Jody Simpson

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 7:59 AM
To: Sen. Lora Reinbold; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. David Wilson; Sen. Tom Begich; Sen. Shelley Hughes
Subject: Please Act on SB 56

Dear Senators,

I urge you to pass this bill on so the state can continue to provide the supports and guidance needed in the continued battle against our share of the Covid-19 pandemic. There is no need for concerns about overreach of the government on our rights. This is clearly a public health emergency and that is it; I see no hidden agenda on the part of the governor to restrict our constitutional rights. Let me tell you I am not happy when I am searched every time I enter an airplane, but by and large we all do it for the greater good. To be honest, I am more concerned about having to be scrutinized every time I travel than I am about following state-required health protocols, that are not codified, like our Patriot Act, but that are clearly temporary.

We are finally in a good place, after being yo-yo'd by various forms of shut-downs. Let us remain calm and carry on. Please move this bill forward in a timely manner as time is of the essence.

Respectfully,

Beverly Churchill

Jody Simpson

From: Carol Doss <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 8:47 AM
To: Sen. David Wilson
Subject: SB56

Please continue the emergency declaration in order to protect Alaskans and continue our a vaccine allocation!

Sent from my iPhone

Jody Simpson

From: Kathleen Todd [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 04, 2021 2:32 PM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: SB56

I am writing to support continuing the emergency due to COVID. I do not see this as in any way being over yet and to undo what we're doing too soon could be devastating.

1) WEe still need travel mandates and mask mandates and sheltered nursing homes, emergency orders, and the like at least at times. These can not wait for legislative action. Protective measures can not always be left to the individual judgement of each Alaskan because many interventions don't work unless everyone does them (I wear a mask for you, you wear a mask for me). Quarantine procedures are important. Communication from the state is important (Most people want to do the right thing and depend on the travel mandate, for instance, to plan how to do their part to stop COVID spread when they return from a necessary trip.)

2)Some of the temporary regulations and the holds placed on others are essential. I don't know if all of these are state based or if some are federal, but being able to see patients remotely, having temporary plastic sheeting over usually open corridors to create negative pressure COVID containment zones in our hospital, being able to expand quickly to take care of patients in unusual areas of the hospital if we get hit with a surge in cases that can't all be transported out immediately due to full house in Anchorage or bad weather, getting supplies for testing from the state, having the state in charge of vaccine distribution, etc. are all essential to my profession at the moment and will be until everyone is vaccinated and the risk level is such that outbreaks of COVID are unlikely.

3)Aren't some federal monies and other support dependent on us being in emergency status as a state?

Please continue to keep Alaska safe by continuing the emergency called for COVID

Kathleen G Todd MD
Valdez, Alaska 99686
[REDACTED]

Jody Simpson

From: Tyler Watson [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 8:00 AM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: Testimony on SB56 - Please Support

Dear members of Senate Health and Social Services Committee,

My name is Tyler Watson. I'm writing in support of SB56, representing myself. The powers granted under an emergency declaration allow our government to respond swiftly to the constantly changing dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic. Alaska is doing a great job in vaccinating our people and keeping severe cases and deaths low. Now is not the time to tie the state's hands in responding to the disaster.

Thank you,

Tyler Watson
Anchorage, AK (House District 16)

--

Tyler Watson
[REDACTED]



ONE SEALASKA PLAZA, SUITE 200 • JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801
TEL (907) 586-1325 • FAX (907) 463-5480 • WWW.AKML.ORG

Member of the National League of Cities and the National Association of Counties

TO: Alaska State Legislature

February 5, 2021

RE: In support of an extended disaster declaration

AML appreciates the Legislature's interest in and commitment to clarifying the roles and responsibilities of decision-makers during a disaster. Clearly, Alaska's lawmakers have a fundamental duty to provide oversight of the Administration's actions, to identify State actions that may otherwise have been made by the Legislature, and to address questions of appropriating and legislative authority.

Evidence suggests that decisions made to protect public health, in the form of mandates, effectively flattened the curve and preserved hospital and healthcare capacity, as they were intended. The consequences of those decisions were impacts to the economy, students, seniors, and our social structures. The Legislature will have an important role in helping Alaska recover.

This pandemic has not ended and it remains incumbent on all levels of government to work together to get through this public health emergency and economic disaster. We hope that the Legislature will work together with the Administration and local governments to continue to meet this threat. We will have time to look back and conduct a thorough analysis of the decisions of those who were in a position to make them. AML stands ready to offer solutions to future emergency planning protocols. However, we encourage you to meet today's challenges and put in place the tools needed to act decisively.

Alaska needs a disaster declaration in place, allowing the State to continue to respond to the public health emergency. Important in the declaration is access to AS 26.23, Alaska's Disaster Act – we believe that Sections 2 and 3 are the relevant elements of the bill. Alaska has a Statute in place to address this challenge and it is appropriate to utilize it through this extension. The extension, from our perspective, needs to go beyond 30 days to be efficient but we can appreciate that it may make sense to amend the timeline proposed in the bill so that the Legislature can revisit the declaration earlier.

The justification for this request is that it allows the State to continue to be responsive to the crisis, as need warrants, to work closely with local governments, and to move resources effectively to meet Alaska's needs. AML members need a nimble State government during a disaster, and to have the flexibility necessary to support Alaska's communities. We encourage you to pass legislation to extend the declaration so that Alaska has the tools necessary to meet the continuing challenges that face this state. Once this critical component is in place, we hope that we can spend the time necessary this session to strengthen Alaska's disaster response, by learning from the lessons experienced thus far.

Respectfully,

Pete Petersen, President
AML Board of Directors

AML Testimony in Support of Extending the Declaration

Nils Andreassen, Executive Director

February 5, 2021

I'd like to start by recognizing the Chair's interest in focusing on this bill in the context of where we're at now and moving forward. There will be time throughout this session to strengthen our disaster response and learn from this pandemic.

For now, local governments are faced with the continued effort necessary to ensure the public health of their residents, the recovery of their economies, the return to school of students, and a collaborative, inter-governmental approach to all. While we're glad for this respite in which caseloads are down, healthcare capacity is sufficient, and the vaccine rollout continues to improve, public health officials continue to signal the need for vigilance – new variants could quickly overwhelm our efforts.

An extension of the State's disaster declaration is consistent with a national effort to maintain vigilance. Lack thereof may require more of a role for the federal government, and remove some of the State control that has been a hallmark of our pandemic response. At the same time, while all other states maintain their disaster declarations, for varying amounts of time into the future, lack thereof in Alaska means we are potentially less competitive in procuring supplies relative to other states, who can act quickly and aggressively.

An extension of the State's disaster declaration is consistent with local interest. Two-thirds of local governments have put in place emergency declarations during this period. Local governments have mitigation measures in place that have contributed to flattening the curve and supporting the build-up of and sustaining healthcare capacity. Lack of a State declaration reduces the efficacy of those local mandates, leading to increased conflict about compliance, and potentially to additional mitigation necessary at the local level. At the same time, many have linked their declaration to the State's, and expiration at the State level will mean nearly 100 local governments may have to revisit their own.

An extension of the State's disaster declaration requires a length of time that places our focus on response and not on the next need for the declaration. The timing is important, in that the more the State and local governments can plan for the long-term needs of Alaskans, the better. 30-day declarations, or extensions, mean that more time is occupied by implementing the newly revised and considering and justifying the next. Short term declarations aren't conducive to the contracts needed to implement testing and vaccination efforts.

An extension of the State's disaster declaration allows for close cooperation between levels of government, but action remains independent. The Governor has repeatedly placed a priority on local control. Local governments have responded by putting in place – or not – measures that respond to this pandemic. These are carefully crafted, lawful actions that are data-driven and managed by local incident commanders in cooperation with State and national public health and disaster response officials. They are responsive to local needs. Working together has placed Alaska at the forefront of the nation when it comes to testing, voluntary vaccination, and local implementation of economic recovery measures.

This Legislature, considerate of Alaska's public health, economic recovery, and social support systems, can rely on a disaster declaration that is in place to ensure all three. Let's be clear that addressing the public health concerns contributes to Alaska's ability to recover. The disaster declaration facilitates this,

such that the State's health orders place a priority on the movement of critical infrastructure, help to implement workplace safety protocols, and promote safe travel into and within Alaska. The State's declaration supports the business community and ensures that commerce continues.

On this last point, in-state testing related to travel was a priority for many of our members, rural, local governments that were concerned about spread within the state and into isolated communities. It was only after extensive conversations with the Governor and DHSS that we were able to see State-led efforts to support local governments, who lacked the ability – authority, resources, capacity – to do this on their own.

I want to close by addressing the tangible effects of this declaration, and what we lose when it expires.

1. We lose dozens of local declarations, for those whose emergency ordinances were linked to the state, either to expire completely or that will be amended
 - a. With ten days in front of us, that means that local officials will scramble to address these, and lose the ability to respond quickly to procurement needs or incident management
 - b. This highlights the dangers of a 30-day declaration, when fully half of it is consumed with getting ready for an extension, or not, and having little time to respond if it doesn't occur
2. We lose the State's ability to waive procurement regulations, which has allowed for the smooth flow of PPE and testing and voluntary vaccination supplies
3. We lose the State's ability to send strike teams to high-risk communities, as happened in Fairbanks, Bethel, and a number of remote communities that saw dangerous spikes during this pandemic
4. We lose the State's ability to organize mass vaccination clinics, like those experienced in the Mat Su and in Fairbanks recently
5. We lose non-congregate sheltering contracts, with applications needed for Certificate of Need before action occurs
6. We lose the ability for the State to establish vaccination delivery tiers, and an open process that may leave our most vulnerable populations behind
7. We lose a coordinated response, in some ways, and the likelihood that we have a balkanization of mitigation efforts that are inconsistent across the state as different communities take up their own mitigation efforts while the State's go from shall to should
8. We lose the National Guard's mobilization and response.
9. We lose credibility and public confidence – the declaration, in many ways, communicates to all Alaskans that Alaska's government officials take this pandemic seriously enough to declare a public health emergency, and lack thereof suggest that Alaskans should take it less so

Chair, these losses may mean less effective public health measures, stalled economic recovery, and additional pressures on our healthcare system that may have less capacity as a result.

In the bigger scheme of things, the disaster declaration provides the infrastructure necessary to respond. It doesn't require response, only allows for it. It isn't the same as local mandates, nor really do

current health orders add restrictions to Alaskans' daily lives. The declaration doesn't restrict – it removes restrictions that allow the State to act effectively.

In the bigger scheme of things, the disaster declaration is a necessary piece of a coordinated federal, state, local response. In front of us lie all the other pieces to debate – tools that the Legislature can add to support schools, students, families, tourism, retail, fishing, oil and gas, businesses, and those who have lost jobs or are facing eviction. There is so much more to do in front of us than we have taken up over these past 10 months, without the legislature in session. Now is the time to fill the gaps.

Finally, in the bigger scheme of things, we would argue that there are many other priorities that we will also need to navigate this legislative session, primary among them being the State's fiscal policy, another necessary building block for a strong recovery.

We implore the Legislature to pass this declaration, amended as necessary, but please ensure that the State has the authority found within the Alaska Disaster Act to continue to meet the needs of Alaskans in this continuing crisis.

Jody Simpson

From: no-reply@alaskasenate.org
Sent: Thursday, February 04, 2021 1:35 PM
To: Sen. David Wilson
Subject: Email Your Senator Form Submission

There has been a submission of the form Email Your Senator through your website.

Your Senator
David Wilson

Your Name
FANNIE SUVLU

Your Email or Phone
[REDACTED]

Question or Concern

Good afternoon Senator Wilson,

I am writing in support of extending the State of Alaska's Emergency declaration. While we have seen a decline in numbers and the vaccine is here, the virus continues. Even with the declaration, we still face many issues regarding COVID. Those issues will increase once the declaration is lifted. I think that really needed to be expressed. While you represent the Valley area, those of us in the rural areas of Alaska are hit harder. When you have a medical emergency in a village that relies on medical evacuations and are told you cannot go that route because the hospitals are full in Fairbanks and Anchorage, that shows that we are still in an emergent situation pertaining to the pandemic. Thank you for taking the time regarding this topic of discussion.

IP Address

https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__24.237.124.124&d=DwlFaQ&c=Q8iJasR7RZ-J0Fd9RXD9ZA&r=KVJII8e3-3-3m_dhDNmvUkYA7ZCSAZDV6BnDUf8ox9w&m=XC5pBzgSNuw7xE4zyalc0fafSOaOOUMwL9A5ifMAp6I&s=G3e1n6W-UrBgjn2N-Lkwby0c14YOH0g42zN4Ye-CRSs&e=



www.cityofseldovia.com

P.O. Drawer B Seldovia, Alaska 99663 Phone: (907) 234-7643, Fax: (907) 234-7430 email: citymanager@cityofseldovia.com

Office of the Honorable Governor Dunleavy
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001
Electronically submitted: Ben.Stevens@alaska.gov

Senator Wilson
State Capitol Room 121
Juneau AK, 99801
Electronically submitted: Senator.David.Wilson@akleg.gov

Subject: Letter of Support for SB 56

February 4, 2021

Honorable Governor Dunleavy and Senator Wilson,

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 56 on behalf of the City of Seldovia. The City has experienced negative financial impacts as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and funds secured from the State of Alaska Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRFs) have assisted the city in its response to and mitigation of the pandemic. As of today, the CRFs have been spent in their entirety by the city however we are still incurring expenses as a result of the pandemic.

I have learned of a significant consequence of not extending the emergency declaration from February to September 2021, specifically that without a state declaration in place, local municipalities would not be eligible for FEMA reimbursement for expenses incurred from the pandemic. Currently Alaskan municipalities qualify through FEMA DR-4533-AK Alaska COVID-19 Pandemic. As stated on the March 19, 2020 FEMA Fact Sheet (enclosed):

"FEMA assistance will be provided at a 75 percent federal cost share. This assistance will require execution of a FEMA-State/Tribal/Territory Agreement, as appropriate, and execution of an applicable emergency plan. Local governments and other eligible Public Assistance applicants will apply through their respective state, tribal or territorial jurisdictions."

On February 2, I had just initiated contact with the Alaska State Public Assistance Branch Chief to explore options on how the City could qualify for FEMA public assistance given there are no CRFs remaining (enclosed). This assistance may be beneficial in helping one of Alaska's many rural communities address the complex and ever-changing demands of the pandemic.

On December 28, 2020, Seldovia City Council adopted Resolution 21-17 further extending the disaster emergency declaration for the city until March 31, 2021 (enclosed). As stated in the resolution:

"While the City, State, and Nation move towards reopening business and resuming certain activities, the City of Seldovia expects the continued impact of COVID-19, including public health risks and economic impacts, will require the City to still be eligible for receiving all assistance made possible with an emergency declaration in place."

Additionally, the city relies on the state for guidance in navigating how best to protect public health and safety during this unprecedented event. If the state's emergency declaration were to go away, it could be viewed as a symbolic gesture that the pandemic is "over" and complicate how the city itself would address/respond to the pandemic on behalf of the public.

Thank you for your consideration,



Rachel Friedlander
City Manager

Enclosures:

1. March 19, 2020 FEMA Fact Sheet
2. Feb. 2, 2021 email exchange concerning FEMA assistance
3. City of Seldovia Resolution 21-17
4. Feb. 4, 2021 Alaska Municipal League Letter to Alaska State Legislature



FEMA (1) Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic: Eligible Emergency Protective Measures

Navigation

Search

Languages

News Releases
(/news-releases)

Fact Sheets (/fact-
sheets)

News Desk
Contacts (/media-
contacts)

Release date: March 19, 2020

Release Number: FACT SHEET

Consistent with the President's national emergency declaration for the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on March 13, 2020, FEMA urges officials to, without delay, take appropriate actions that are necessary to protect public health and safety pursuant to public health guidance and conditions and capabilities in their jurisdictions. FEMA provides the following guidance on the types of emergency protective measures that may be eligible under FEMA's Public Assistance Program in accordance with the COVID-19 Emergency Declaration in order to ensure that resource constraints do not inhibit efforts to respond to this unprecedented disaster.

FEMA Public Assistance Program

In accordance with section 502 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5121-5207 (the "Stafford Act"), eligible emergency protective measures taken to respond to the COVID-19 emergency at the direction or guidance of public health officials may be reimbursed under Category B of FEMA's Public Assistance program. FEMA will not duplicate assistance provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), (<http://www.hhs.gov/>) to include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), (<http://www.cdc.gov/>), or other federal agencies.

State, territorial, tribal, and local government entities and certain private non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for Public Assistance (<https://www.fema.gov/public-assistance-local-state-tribal-and-non-profit>). FEMA assistance will be provided at a 75 percent federal cost share. This assistance will require execution of a FEMA-State/Tribal/Territory Agreement, as appropriate, and execution of an applicable emergency plan. Local governments and other eligible PA applicants will apply through their respective state, tribal or territorial jurisdictions.

Eligible Assistance

Under the COVID-19 Emergency Declaration described above, FEMA may provide assistance for emergency protective measures including, but not limited to, the following, if not funded by the HHS/CDC or other federal agency. While some activities listed may be eligible for funding through HHS/CDC, final reimbursement determinations will be coordinated by HHS and FEMA. FEMA will not duplicate any assistance provided by HHS/CDC):

- **Management, control and reduction of immediate threats to public health and safety:**
 - Emergency Operation Center costs
 - Training specific to the declared event
 - Disinfection of eligible public facilities
 - Technical assistance to state, tribal, territorial or local governments on emergency management and control of immediate threats to public health and safety
- **Emergency medical care:**
 - Non-deferrable medical treatment of infected persons in a shelter or temporary medical facility
 - Related medical facility services and supplies

Rachel Friedlander

From: Seve, Andrew (MVA sponsored) <andrew.seve@alaska.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 1:22 PM
To: Rachel Friedlander; Williams, John G (MVA sponsored)
Cc: Jan Yaeger; Hahn, Martha L (MVA sponsored); Zeppa, Jonathan D (MVA)
Subject: RE: City of Seldovia & Support from FEMA
Attachments: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Eligible Emergency Protective Measures.pdf; COVID Eligibility(FINAL).pdf; DHS&EM Form 30-71 Benefits Calculation Worksheet.xlsx; DHS&EM Form 30-72 Labor Summary (Management Costs).xlsx; DHS&EM Form 30-72 Labor Summary (Project Costs).xlsx; DHS&EM Form 30-73 Materials Summary.xlsx; DHS&EM Form 30-74 Rented Equipment Summary.xlsx; DHS&EM Form 30-75 Contract Work Summary.xlsx; DHS&EM Form 30-76 Force Account Equipment Summary.xlsx; DHS&EM Form 30-78 Per Diem Summary.xlsx; fema_policy_104-009-19_PA-eligibility-policy-covid.pdf; FP 104-010-04 Public Assistance Medical Care Policy for COVID-19.signed.pdf; NCS Data Tracker.xlsx; PAPPG Eligible Costs.pdf; PAPPG EPM.pdf; Reasonable Cost Evaluation Job Aid.pdf

Good Afternoon Rachel,

My name is Andrew Seve, and I am managing the team of State Public Assistance Officers that are assisting applicants with their projects as it relates to FEMA declared DR-4533-AK Alaska COVID-19 Pandemic.

I have attached several FEMA guidance documents or fact sheets that provide a broad overview of Emergency Protective Measures eligible for reimbursement, as well as a "Designation of Applicant's Agent" form which is a one page form I need you to fill out and return to me to identify the responsible parties in your community.

The next step would be to conduct what we call an Applicant's Briefing, which will provide an overview of the PA Program as it relates to DR-4533-AK, as well as next steps for you, the applicant.

This presentation will be about an hour. Please let me know what time and date next week works for you and your staff to conduct this Applicant's Briefing and get moving with your engagement with the FEMA PA Program.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,

Andrew Seve
State Public Assistance Branch Chief (DR-4533-AK)
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
Office: (907) 428-7082
Mobile: (571) 278-2100



From: Rachel Friedlander <citymanager@cityofseldovia.com>
Sent: Monday, February 1, 2021 10:28 AM
To: Williams, John G (MVA sponsored) <john.williams2@alaska.gov>
Cc: Jan Yaeger <finance@cityofseldovia.com>
Subject: City of Seldovia & Support from FEMA

Hi John,

I worked with you briefly while at the City of Homer and recently transitioned over to the City of Seldovia as their city manager. The City of Seldovia has already expended its Coronavirus Relief Funds granted from the State yet we are still experiencing financial impacts from the pandemic. I was thinking through solutions and remembered FEMA does have the capability to provide financial assistance to municipalities being impacted. Seldovia has very limited resources to pursue a major FEMA application, but I know there is a streamlined option. Would you have time to explore that option with me next week? And if Seldovia has another state rep we should be working with to navigate this process, please send me their way. I just thought I would start with a familiar name!

Best regards,
Rachel

Rachel Friedlander
City Manager

City of Seldovia
P.O. Drawer B
Seldovia, Alaska 99663
Office: (907) 234.7643
Fax: (907) 234.7430

**CITY OF SELDOVIA
RESOLUTION 21-17**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SELDOVIA, ALASKA
FURTHER EXTENDING THE DISASTER EMERGENCY DECLARATION FOR THE CITY OF
SELDOVIA ORIGINALLY ISSUED ON MARCH 20, 2020 AND RATIFIED BY CITY COUNCIL
DUE TO THE IMPACTS OF THE COVID-19 HEALTH EMERGENCY TO MARCH 31, 2021**

WHEREAS, The City Manager of the City of Seldovia issued a Local Disaster Emergency Declaration March 20, 2020, per AS 26.23.140 and the Seldovia Emergency Operations Plan, due to the current and expected impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the City of Seldovia; and

WHEREAS, The declaration activated the City's Emergency Response Plan and permitted the City to request disaster assistance from the State of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seldovia received both financial and operational disaster assistance from the State of Alaska and Kenai Peninsula Borough to respond to and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the City; and

WHEREAS, Financial assistance from the State of Alaska and Kenai Peninsula Borough was allocated to the City with Coronavirus Relief Funds released through executed grant agreements; and

WHEREAS, Ongoing operational assistance from the State and Borough has continued to help the City with planning, mitigation, response, community health, and staff support in regards to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, With this financial and operational support, the City has been able to redistribute Coronavirus Relief Funds to provide assistance to affected City of Seldovia businesses and individuals while helping the City itself mitigate COVID-19's various impacts; and

WHEREAS, On March 27, 2020, the City's Emergency Declaration was ratified and extended for a period of 90 days by Resolution 20-23 and expired June 25, 2020; and

WHEREAS, On June 22, 2020, the City Council passed Resolution 20-31, further extending the Disaster Emergency Declaration for 90 days, which expired September 23, 2020; and

WHEREAS, On September 14, 2020, the City Council passed Resolution 21-07, further extending the Disaster Emergency Declaration through December 31, 2020; and

WHEREAS, While the City, State and Nation move towards reopening business and resuming certain activities, the City of Seldovia expects the continued impact of COVID-19, including public health risks and economic impacts, will require the City to still be eligible for receiving all assistance made possible with an emergency declaration in place; and

WHEREAS, It is in the best interest of the City to further extend the Disaster Emergency Declaration originally issued by the City Manager and ratified by Seldovia City Council until March 31, 2021, which aligns with the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SELDOVIA:

Section 1. That the City Council of the City of Seldovia further extends, until March 31, 2021, or until repealed sooner, the Declaration of Local Disaster Emergency originally issued on March 20, 2020, and subsequently extended by this Council through legislation, due to the impacts of the COVID-19 health emergency.

Section 2. That the City requests that the State of Alaska and Kenai Peninsula Borough provide disaster assistance to the City by making available resources as needed in the ongoing response and recovery from the current and potential impacts of this health emergency, to provide individual assistance for the affected businesses and individuals, and to provide technical expertise and guidance, to help the City in its response and recovery from this event.

Section 3. That the City additionally requests assistance from federal agencies where state or borough capability is not adequate.

Section 4. That a copy of this declaration will be promptly filed with the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and the Kenai Peninsula Office of Emergency Management.

Section 5. That this resolution takes effect immediately upon passage.

PASSED AND APPROVED by a duly constituted quorum of the City Council of the City of Seldovia, on this 28th day of December, 2020.

ATTEST:


Heidi Geagel, City Clerk

APPROVED:


Jeremiah Campbell, Mayor



Jody Simpson

From: Phillip A. Zavadil <pazavadil@stpaulak.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 04, 2021 2:09 PM
To: Sen. David Wilson
Cc: Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Mark Hickey; Jacob Merculief; Nils Andreassen; St. Paul Island Unified Command
Subject: State of Alaska Disaster Declaration
Importance: High

Dear Senator Wilson,

The City of Saint Paul appreciates the Legislature's interest in and commitment to clarifying the roles and responsibilities of decision-makers during a disaster. Clearly, Alaska's lawmakers have a fundamental duty to provide oversight of the Administration's actions, to identify State actions that may otherwise have been made by the Legislature, and to address questions of appropriating and legislative authority.

Evidence suggests that decisions made to protect public health, in the form of mandates, effectively flattened the curve and preserved hospital and healthcare capacity, as they were intended. The consequences of those decisions impacted the economy, students, seniors, and our social structures.

The takeaway from this is less that decisions made to protect public health shouldn't have been made, but that additional decisions were and are warranted. The Legislature has a chance to act to help Alaska recover. Between budget and policy decisions, we encourage you to keep in mind the health and well-being of Alaskans and Alaska businesses.

The City of Saint Paul has played a crucial role in the overall effort to sustain both public health and economic activity. The CARES Act funding the City of Saint Paul received supported mitigation efforts in our community. I am proud to say that Saint Paul Island is still COVID free to date. This is due the partnerships we have developed with the Aleut Community of Saint Paul Island, TDX, Pribilof School District, Trident Seafoods, Central Bering Sea Fishermen's Association, the DHSS public health team, Unified Command, and the Governor. We have all worked through challenges and combined efforts to meet the demands of this pandemic.

This pandemic has not ended with the beginning of the Legislative session, and it remains incumbent on all levels of government to work together to get through this public health emergency and economic disaster. I hope that the Legislature will work together with the Administration, and together with the City of Saint Paul, to continue to meet this threat. I trust that by acting in concert, we can steer Alaska through these challenging times.

The Legislature's integrity throughout Alaska's history has been crucial, making hard decisions when Alaska needed it most. The City of Saint Paul and the Saint Paul Island Unified Command stands ready

to offer solutions to future emergency planning protocols. However, I encourage you to meet today's challenges and put in place the action needed for Alaska's future.

Alaska and Saint Paul Island needs a disaster declaration in place. It doesn't have to be the Governor's proposed extension. It doesn't have to include bells and whistles, though those will need to be taken up as next steps. It doesn't have to last forever, but it needs to go beyond 30 days. We implore this body to either start over with a pared down version of SB 56 or draft your own declaration. Keep it simple, so that it can move quickly and meet a February 14 deadline. Act quickly and decisively, so that Alaskans may have faith in the role of the Legislature.

The easy justification for this request is that it allows the State to continue to be responsive to the crisis, as need warrants, to work closely with local governments like ours, and to move resources effectively to meet Alaska's needs. The City of Saint Paul needs State government to work during a disaster, and to have the flexibility necessary to support Alaska's communities.

There are scenarios where the Legislature doesn't act. The federal government may take a more active role, displacing Alaska decision-making. Local governments may need to continue to step in, but would need the State's remaining federal assistance funding to do so. Failure to issue a declaration – of your own or the Governor's – may have unintended consequences.

Please, pass a declaration so that Alaska has the tools necessary to meet the continuing challenges that face this state. Passage of a declaration will place the Legislature at the forefront of this response. Once this critical component is in place, I hope that we can spend the time necessary this session to strengthen Alaska's disaster response, by learning from the lessons experienced thus far.

If the legislator does not pass this declaration, you will limit the City of Saint Paul's ability to keep our community protected from the virus and keep it COVID free.

As legislators, you have the authority and will necessary to act with the duty of care that will be crucial for Alaska's recovery. Alaskans wouldn't have elected you otherwise. Our community is counting on you.

Phil

Txin qaġaasakuqing ~ Thank you



Phillip A. Zavadil, City Manager
City of Saint Paul
PO Box 901 950 Gorbach Street
Saint Paul Island, Alaska 99660
907-546-3113 (Office) 907-546-3188 (Fax) 907-546-4179 (Cell)



(907) 452-8181 Phone
(907) 458-5324 Fax
www.foundationhealth.org
1650 Cowles Street
Fairbanks, AK 99701

February 4, 2021

Senator Click Bishop	Representative Mike Cronk	Representative Mike Prax
Senator Scott Kawasaki	Representative Grier Hopkins	Representative Steve Thompson
Senator Robert Myers	Representative Bart LeBon	Representative Adam Wool

Dear Interior Delegation,

We cannot imagine how difficult it is for all of you as you navigate the challenging political climate in Juneau. Please know that your willingness to serve during these unprecedented tough times is very much appreciated here at home. The Interior Delegation's camaraderie has served Interior Alaska well. We are grateful for your support and dedication to Foundation Health Partners and Interior Alaskans.

We write today to ask for your help in the effort to extend the Public Health Disaster Emergency Declaration. We are aware of the challenges toward passage of legislation such as SB 56 as the House works through organizational structure. We do not pretend to understand the solution to this predicament. We believe that Alaska's extension of the Federal Emergency Declaration is beneficial to Foundation Health Partners, our entire healthcare system, and the residents of Interior Alaska.

Specifically, the Declaration includes numerous Federal blanket waivers resulting in exemptions from sanctions for Medicaid and Medicare services which primarily affect requirements for individual facilities, such as hospitals, long term care facilities and health care facilities. The Federal waivers provide access to increased patient care and streamlined reimbursement for services that are important to us and to Interior residents. Specific and practical examples of the value of this Emergency Declaration follows.

- **Tanana Valley Clinic - Telehealth:** TVC was unable to provide telemedicine prior to the federal waiver due to Medicare billing restrictions (we were not a designated rural area). Under the waiver, previously ineligible healthcare professionals employed by TVC are now authorized to provide and receive Medicare reimbursement for telemedicine services, including behavioral health, primary care, and specialty care. FHP is also receiving reimbursement for wound care, physical therapists, and occupational therapists. With the CMS waiver in place, TVC experienced high volumes of telemedicine appointments in April, May, and June when many clinical offices closed, and the community was under state health mandates limiting services. Telemedicine is of critical importance when patients are quarantined and/or unable to present to a provider. In the last year, telemedicine appointments account for approximately 10% of the total TVC clinic encounters thus avoiding the serious potential for the negative impacts of delayed care.
- **Denali Center - Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF):** The CMS 3-day prior hospitalization requirement for coverage in a skilled nursing facility (SNF) is waived. Temporary emergency coverage of SNF services without a qualifying hospital stay is permitted under the Federal waiver. In addition, for certain beneficiaries who exhausted their SNF benefits, it authorizes renewed coverage without first having to start and complete a 60-day "wellness period".

The waiver also provides extended care to those in need of longer-term care in the Interior, a situation made more challenging during COVID-19. It is especially beneficial to patients that they have uninterrupted care and the ability to transfer more easily from FMH to DC. CMS is waiving all requirements related to post-acute care services to expedite the safe discharge and movement of patients among care settings, and to be responsive to fluid situations.

- FHP System-Wide – Financials: Thanks in part to your support of CARES Act funding, FHP is on stable financial ground. While our positive cases are currently in decline and the vaccine has brought renewed hope of recovery, we have many months yet ahead of us to continue to wage the war against the pandemic. While many service lines have not returned to pre-COVID levels the CARES Act support has kept us financially stable.

While we continue to provide safe quality healthcare to Interior residents, we are also actively engaged in vaccine distribution through the Incident Command Center (Carlson Center), Fairbanks Memorial Hospital, and Denali Center and the J. Michael Carroll Cancer Center. We will continue to rely on Federal funding and reimbursement of COVID expenses through 2021.

Without the adoption of the Federal Emergency Declaration extension, the current declaration expires 12 AM on February 14, 2021, Alaska could risk millions in federal funds to cover these costs through Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements if this extension fails to be executed by February 13, 2021.

We appreciate your time and consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or our Juneau lobbyist Yuri Morgan, for additional information.

Sincerely,



Shelley D. Ebernal,
CEO Foundation Health Partners

cc: Governor Mike Dunleavy
Chief of Staff, Ben Stevens
Senate Health & Social Services Committee

Jody Simpson

From: Kevin Munson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 04, 2021 2:46 PM
To: Sen. David Wilson
Subject: SB 56

I would like to express my support for SB 56. We continue to need the flexibility and resources that the continued declaration will provide. As a Federal Qualified Community Health Center as well as a Community Behavioral Health Center, Mat-Su Health Services (MSHS) has been deeply involved in the emergency response to Covid-19. Under the emergency declaration(s) MSHS has been able to maintain its core services to the patients it serves while protecting their health and safety as well as the health and safety of our workforce.

The suspension of certain regulations has introduced enormous and necessary flexibility in our ability to deliver care in novel and effective ways, in particular in the expansion and increased flexibility around telehealth service delivery. Many of our patients face time, distance and travel challenges in the best of time. The expansion of telemedicine options has given us a valuable tool to maintain and expand our ability to provide care. Many have conditions for which face-to-face care are contraindicated in the midst of a pandemic; we are able to maintain continuity of care under the waivers. If the traditional regulations go back into place, we would lose almost all our ability to deliver care in this way.

The declaration permits federal waivers which are critical to our operations. How and where we can deliver care such as Covid-19 testing and vaccine distribution are linked to a declaration which is linked to the federal flexibility. Our ability to obtain and retain testing equipment, PPE, testing supplies and vaccine resources are linked to the declaration.

Covid-19 has devastated our communities. We have unprecedented mental health, educational, relational and vocational challenges. These get expressed in increases in depression and anxiety, substance abuse, child neglect and abuse, marriages in distress and divorce. The ability and flexibility to respond to these secondary consequences would be compromised without the freedom the declaration affords.

Please pass SB 56.

Kevin Munson

Kevin Munson, MS MAPA LPC CRM
Chief Executive Officer
Mat-Su Health Services, Inc.
(907) 352-3210 (voice)
(907) 352-3363 (fax)
kmunson@matsuhealth.org
www.mshsak.org

Dedicated to Improving the Health of Our Community, One Person at a Time—through affordable medical, dental and behavioral healthcare

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Native Village of Eyak
110 Nicholoff Way
P.O. Box 1388
Cordova, Alaska 99574-1388
P (907) 424-7738 * F (907) 424-7739
www.eyak-usn.gov



10,000 years in our Traditional Homeland, Prince William Sound, the Copper River Delta, and the Gulf of Alaska

February 4, 2021

The Honorable David Wilson
Chairman, Senate Health & Social Services Committee
Alaska Senate
State Capitol Room 121
Juneau, AK 99801
Via Email: Senator.David.Wilson@akleg.gov

RE: Senate Bill 56 to Extend the COVID-19 Public Health Disaster Emergency

Dear Chairman Wilson,

The extension of the public health disaster emergency (PHE) is vital for administrative, regulatory, and statutory flexibilities that have allowed Alaska to respond quickly and successfully to the COVID-19 pandemic. Alaska is leading the way in responding to the pandemic and it is vital that we continue to do so. I am writing in support of Senate Bill 56 and its swift passage to continue these flexibilities.

Alaska Community Health Center is a Tribally owned Community Health Center, owned by the Native Village of Eyak. The State's PHE has provided the opportunity to support the citizens of Cordova as well as the transient fishing industry through Covid Testing and vaccine administration as well as food security and other public health issues created by the pandemic.

The State's PHE has allowed for a series of flexibilities that have allowed for Governor Dunleavy's administration, specifically the Department of Health & Social Services and the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, as well as health care providers and facilities to respond effectively to COVID-19. A few of the important flexibilities made available by the PHE are:

Vaccine distribution – The powers authorized under the State PHE allow the governor to control the distribution of scarce resources, including scarce COVID-19 vaccines. Without the State PHE, the Department of Health and Social Services will not be able to distribute the COVID-19 vaccine using the State Vaccination Distribution Plan which prioritizes vulnerable populations, such as our Elders and our first responders.

Vaccine administration – The State PHE does not just support the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines, it also provides essential flexibility to allow more provider types to be able to administer vaccines. This includes the ability to deploy the Alaska National Guard for contact tracing efforts and vaccine administration.

Provider licensing flexibilities – Under the PHE, providers have received expedited, limited-use licenses that have reinforced Alaska's health care workforce during a time of severe strain. Alaska has fewer health care professionals per capita than most states, and there was a chronic need for providers in Alaska even before the pandemic.

Telehealth provision and reimbursement – The State's PHE also allows patients to see providers for telehealth services without first having an in-person visit. This has been important to keep patients and providers safe during the pandemic, but it has also allowed providers to bill third party payors, providing much needed funding to clinics who have seen patient visits decline dramatically during the pandemic.

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10,000 years in our Traditional Homeland, Prince William Sound, the Copper River Delta, and the Gulf of Alaska

Continued provision of medication assisted treatment for patients with substance use disorders – 12 AAC 40.943 allows a provider to see and prescribe controlled substances used as part of medication assisted treatment for substance use disorders via telemedicine during a declared disaster emergency without conducting required in-person exams. This flexibility has been used by rural providers to ensure patients do not have to go without treatment and can remain safe during the pandemic.

Alternate Care Sites – The State's PHE has been a vital component for standing up Alternate Care Sites (ACS) used for testing and treating patients for COVID-19 in non-traditional locations based on their clinical needs. For example, this flexibility allowed the State to establish a field hospital in King Salmon during the fishing season to help ensure local providers had the staffing and capacity to identify and treat COVID-19 in migrant workers. Generally, it has allowed for hospitals to establish an ACS that separates COVID-19 related care and treatment from non-COVID-19 care, keeping patients and providers safe.

Quarantining Sites – The State PHE also has made it possible to quickly stand up Quarantining Sites for COVID-19 patients during their isolation period. Without the State PHE, it would become significantly more difficult to stand these sites up, especially in our rural hub communities. This flexibility also supports local hospitality businesses which have suffered greatly due to decreased tourism during the pandemic.

Travel – The State PHE also made it possible to limit travel to Alaska and to our vulnerable rural, remote communities. These limitations have continued to protect rural communities in Alaska, especially those with community-based water and sanitation facilities, which face an increased risk of community-based transmission. Many of our rural communities cannot access the treatment options available at acute care facilities in a timely manner, making prevention from exposure to COVID-19 vital to individual and public health.

The State's PHE and flexibilities are distinct from the public health powers of local governments and the federal government, but necessary to allow the State to respond effectively to the pandemic. We urge swift passage of Senate Bill 56 by the Alaska State Legislature.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact Kari Collins RN, Health Director for the Native Village of Eyak. 907-424-3622/Kari.Collins@eyak-nsn.gov

Sincerely,

Mark Hoover
Tribal Council Chairman
Native Village of Eyak

CC: Senate Health & Social Services Committee Members
Alaska Senate
Alaska House of Representatives



Bristol Bay Area
Health Corporation
6000 Kanakanak Road
P.O. Box 130
Dillingham, AK 99576
(907) 842-5201
(800) 478-5201
FAX (907) 842-9354
www.bbahc.org

*Bristol Bay Area
Health Corporation is
a tribal organization
representing 28 villages in
Southwest Alaska:*

Aleknagik
Chignik Bay
Chignik Lagoon
Chignik Lake
Clark's Point
Dillingham
Egegik
Ekuk
Ekwok
Goodnews Bay
Ivanof Bay
Kanakanak
King Salmon
Krugank
Koliganek
Levelock
Manokotak
Naknek
New Stuyahok
Perryville
Pilot Point
Platinum
Port Helden
Portage Creek
South Naknek
Togiak
Twinn Hills
Ugashik

*Our Mission: We
provide quality
health care with
competence,
compassion, and
sensitivity.*

February 4, 2021

The Honorable David Wilson
Chairman, Senate Health & Social Services Committee
Alaska Senate
State Capitol Room 121
Juneau, AK 99801
Via Email: Senator.David.Wilson@akleg.gov

RE: Senate Bill 56 to Extend the COVID-19 Public Health Disaster Emergency

Dear Chairman Wilson,

The extension of the public health disaster emergency (PHE) is vital for administrative, regulatory, and statutory flexibilities that have allowed Alaska to respond quickly and successfully to the COVID-19 pandemic. Alaska is leading the way in responding to the pandemic and it is vital that we continue to do so. The Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation (BBAHC) is writing in support of Senate Bill 56 and its swift passage to continue these flexibilities along with our Governor Dunleavy, Commissioner Adam Crum, Alaska Native Health Board representing all Tribes/Tribal Health Organizations in Alaska, the Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association and many other groups that care about our people's health.

BBAHC is a tribal organization that serves a large rural area in southwest Alaska comprised of 27 small villages and the (hub) city of Dillingham; 21 of these villages have clinics. We do not have access to main road systems and most of the travel is done by small air carriers. This area continues to see more COVID-19 cases. In fact, there were 14 new positive cases of COVID-19 reported to the State of Alaska the week of January 29 – February 3, 2021. Also, just yesterday, the Dillingham School has closed due to possible exposure at the school. BBAHC will be hosting a mass testing event for students and staff on Sunday, February 7, 2021. Most cases reported are suspected to be travel related. We continue to ask residents to help stop the spread of COVID-19 by quarantining after travel, wear a mask, wash hands frequently with soap and water and practice social distancing and limit group activities with people outside of your household. We hope consideration is given to the anticipated many more months of this Pandemic that all our fish processors in Bristol Bay and the fishermen, etc. again prove in writing they are COVID free with the test, quarantine and the use of proper PPE's and ideally have had their shots. Note the recent issues in the news if one lets their guard down.

The State's PHE has allowed for a series of flexibilities that have allowed for Governor Dunleavy's administration, specifically the Department of Health & Social Services and the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, as well as health care providers and facilities to respond effectively to COVID-19. A few of the important flexibilities made available by the PHE are:

- **Vaccine distribution** – The powers authorized under the State PHE allow the governor to control the distribution of scarce resources, including scarce COVID-19 vaccines. Without the State PHE, the Department of Health and Social Services will

not be able to distribute the COVID-19 vaccine using the State Vaccination Distribution Plan which prioritizes vulnerable populations, such as our Elders and our first responders.

- **Vaccine administration** – The State PHE does not just support the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines, it also provides essential flexibility to allow more provider types to be able to administer vaccines. This includes the ability to deploy the Alaska National Guard for contact tracing efforts and vaccine administration.
- **Provider licensing flexibilities** – Under the PHE, providers have received expedited, limited-use licenses that have reinforced Alaska's health care workforce during a time of severe strain. Alaska has fewer health care professionals per capita than most states, and there was a chronic need for providers in Alaska even before the pandemic.
- **Telehealth provision and reimbursement** – The State's PHE also allows patients to see providers for telehealth services without first having an in-person visit. This has been important to keep patients and providers safe during the pandemic, but it has also allowed providers to bill third party payors, providing much needed funding to clinics who have seen patient visits decline dramatically during the pandemic.
- **Continued provision of medication assisted treatment for patients with substance use disorders** – 12 AAC 40.943 allows a provider to see and prescribe controlled substances used as part of medication assisted treatment for substance use disorders via telemedicine during a declared disaster emergency without conducting required in-person exams. This flexibility has been used by rural providers to ensure patients do not have to go without treatment and can remain safe during the pandemic.
- **Alternate Care Sites** – The State's PHE has been a vital component for standing up Alternate Care Sites (ACS) used for testing and treating patients for COVID-19 in non-traditional locations based on their clinical needs. For example, this flexibility allowed the State to establish a field hospital in King Salmon during the fishing season to help ensure local providers had the staffing and capacity to identify and treat COVID-19 in migrant workers. Generally, it has allowed for hospitals to establish an ACS that separates COVID-19 related care and treatment from non-COVID-19 care, keeping patients and providers safe.
- **Quarantining Sites** – The State PHE also has made it possible to quickly stand-up Quarantining Sites for COVID-19 patients during their isolation period. Without the State PHE, it would become significantly more difficult to stand these sites up, especially in our rural hub communities. This flexibility also supports local hospitality businesses which have suffered greatly due to decreased tourism during the pandemic.
- **Travel** – The State PHE also made it possible to limit travel to Alaska and to our vulnerable rural, remote communities. These limitations have continued to protect rural communities in Alaska, especially those with community-based water and sanitation facilities, which face an increased risk of community-based transmission.

Many of our rural communities cannot access the treatment options available at acute care facilities in a timely manner, making prevention from exposure to COVID-19 vital to individual and public health.

The State's PHE and flexibilities are distinct from the public health powers of local governments and the federal government, but necessary to allow the State to respond effectively to the pandemic. We urge swift passage of Senate Bill 56 by the Alaska State Legislature.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact Robert J. Clark, President and Chief Executive Officer at rclark@bbahc.org or call 1-907-842-5201.

Sincerely,

BRISTOL BAY AREA HEALTH CORPORATION



Robert J. Clark
President/Chief Executive Officer

cc: Senate Health & Social Services Committee Members
Alaska Senate
Alaska House of Representatives
Alaska Native Health Board
Alaska Tribal Health Consortium
Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association
Evangeline "Angel" Dotomain, Alaska Indian Health Service Director
Senator Lyman Hoffman
Representative Bryce Edgmon
Bristol Bay Native Association
Bristol Bay Native Corporation
Bristol Bay Housing Authority
Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation
United Tribes of Bristol Bay
Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation Board of Directors
Alaska Federation of Natives



CITY AND BOROUGH OF WRANGELL

INCORPORATED MAY 30, 2008

P.O. BOX 531 (907)-874-2381
Wrangell, AK 99929 FAX (907)-874-3952

February 4, 2021

Senator David Wilson
State Capitol Room 121
Juneau AK, 99801
Email: Senator.David.Wilson@akleg.gov

Dear Senator Wilson:

The City & Borough of Wrangell respectfully requests the support of the Legislature in renewing the State's Declaration of Emergency for the COVID-19 Pandemic. Wrangell was the first municipality in Southeast Alaska to declare an Economic Disaster in August of 2020. This was due to the loss of tourism related to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the collapse of the regional salmon fisheries. Wrangell NEEDS the continued recovery of the economy. The only way this is possible is by keeping COVID-19 controlled to the maximum degree possible. The State Declaration allows measures to be in place that provide much needed supplies and safety requirements for our community.

As an isolated island community, Wrangell has fared very well during the Pandemic. That is due in large part to state mandates requiring testing for incoming interstate travelers and mitigation plans for critical workforce cohorts. If those requirements terminate because the Emergency Declaration is allowed to sunset, it leaves communities like Wrangell very vulnerable.

Wrangell is home to a small critical access hospital, but any COVID-19 positive individuals requiring hospitalization (at any level) must be medivaced off the island to a larger medical facility. Our hospital lacks supply and staff resources to provide the intensive level of care required for COVID-19. Our geographic isolation creates a much different situation than for those areas of the state on the road system with access a short vehicle commute to major medical centers. For us, keeping COVID closely tracked is of significant importance. Interstate testing allows this to happen.

Fish processing will begin again soon in Wrangell. Without the requirements outlined in the existing State mandate for fish processing all of our coastal communities face the specter of outbreak like we are currently seeing in Akutan. COVID is ravaging the employee base with mitigation requirements mandated. Imagine what could happen if there is nothing in place.

February 4, 2021

The State's Declaration also provides for the distribution of supplies to communities. Without this in place, the State Emergency Operation Center is unable to procure additional supplies for distribution at the local level. Given the continued demand on medical supplies across the nation, communities like Wrangell are often unable to procure supplies through the normal commercial sources. The supply chain from the State is critical for us.

Senator Wilson, we urge the swift action of the Legislature to extend the State's Emergency Declaration. It is critical for our health. It is critical for our economy. Please contact me with any questions at 907-305-3016 or stephenprysunka@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Prysunka', with a large, stylized flourish at the bottom.

Stephen Prysunka
Mayor

CITY OF TENAKEE SPRINGS

Dan Kennedy
MAYOR

dan.kennedy@cityoftenakee.com

P.O. Box 52
Tenakee Springs, Alaska 99841
Phone 907-736-2207
Fax 907-736-2249

February 4, 2021

Dan Kennedy, Mayor
PO Box 52
Tenakee Springs, AK 99841

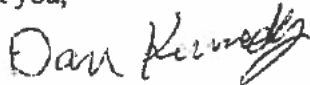
TO: Alaska State Legislature

RE: In support of an extended disaster declaration

We, the City of Tenakee Springs, Alaska, urge the Senate to pass SB56.

This will continue the proactive and generally successful State reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic and will also continue to allow FEMA support to communities in Alaska affected negatively by the pandemic.

Thank you,



Dan Kennedy
Mayor

2/4/2021

The Honorable David Wilson
Chairman, Senate Health & Social Services Committee
Alaska Senate
State Capitol Room 121
Juneau, AK 99801
Via Email: Senator.David.Wilson@akleg.gov

RE: Senate Bill 56 to Extend the COVID-19 Public Health Disaster Emergency

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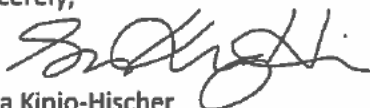
- **Vaccine distribution** – The powers authorized under the State PHE allow the governor to control the distribution of scarce resources, including scarce COVID-19 vaccines. Without the State PHE, the Department of Health and Social Services will not be able to distribute the COVID-19 vaccine using the State Vaccination Distribution Plan which prioritizes vulnerable populations, such as our Elders and our first responders.
- **Vaccine administration** – The State PHE does not just support the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines, it also provides essential flexibility to allow more provider types to be able to administer vaccines. This includes the ability to deploy the Alaska National Guard for contact tracing efforts and vaccine administration.
- **Provider licensing flexibilities** – Under the PHE, providers have received expedited, limited-use licenses that have reinforced Alaska's health care workforce during a time of severe strain. Alaska has fewer health care professionals per capita than most states, and there was a chronic need for providers in Alaska even before the pandemic.
- **Telehealth provision and reimbursement** – The State's PHE also allows patients to see providers for telehealth services without first having an in-person visit. This has been important to keep patients and providers safe during the pandemic, but it has also allowed providers to bill third party payors, providing much needed funding to clinics who have seen patient visits decline dramatically during the pandemic.

- **Continued provision of medication assisted treatment for patients with substance use disorders** – 12 AAC 40.943 allows a provider to see and prescribe controlled substances used as part of medication assisted treatment for substance use disorders via telemedicine during a declared disaster emergency without conducting required in-person exams. This flexibility has been used by rural providers to ensure patients do not have to go without treatment and can remain safe during the pandemic.
- **Alternate Care Sites** – The State’s PHE has been a vital component for standing up Alternate Care Sites (ACS) used for testing and treating patients for COVID-19 in non-traditional locations based on their clinical needs. For example, this flexibility allowed the State to establish a field hospital in King Salmon during the fishing season to help ensure local providers had the staffing and capacity to identify and treat COVID-19 in migrant workers. Generally, it has allowed for hospitals to establish an ACS that separates COVID-19 related care and treatment from non-COVID-19 care, keeping patients and providers safe.
- **Quarantining Sites** – The State PHE also has made it possible to quickly stand up Quarantining Sites for COVID-19 patients during their isolation period. Without the State PHE, it would become significantly more difficult to stand these sites up, especially in our rural hub communities. This flexibility also supports local hospitality businesses which have suffered greatly due to decreased tourism during the pandemic.
- **Travel** – The State PHE also made it possible to limit travel to Alaska and to our vulnerable rural, remote communities. These limitations have continued to protect rural communities in Alaska, especially those with community-based water and sanitation facilities, which face an increased risk of community-based transmission. Many of our rural communities cannot access the treatment options available at acute care facilities in a timely manner, making prevention from exposure to COVID-19 vital to individual and public health.

The State’s PHE and flexibilities are distinct from the public health powers of local governments and the federal government, but necessary to allow the State to respond effectively to the pandemic. We urge swift passage of Senate Bill 56 by the Alaska State Legislature.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please feel free to contact me at sara@skagwaytraditional.org.

Sincerely,



Sara Kinjo-Hischer
Tribal Administrator

CC: Senate Health & Social Services Committee Members
Alaska Senate
Alaska House of Representatives
Skagway Traditional Council Board Members



Alaska Native Health Board

THE VOICE OF ALASKA TRIBAL HEALTH SINCE 1968

☐ 907.562.6006 ☐ 907.563.2001 • 4000 Ambassador Drive, Suite 101 • Anchorage, Alaska 99508 • www.anhb.org

February 4, 2021

The Honorable Peter Micciche
Senate President
Alaska Senate
State Capitol Room 111
Juneau, AK 99801
Via Email: Senator.Peter.Micciche@akleg.gov

RE: Senate Bill 56 to Extend the COVID-19 Public Health Disaster Emergency

Dear Senator Micciche,

The Alaska Native Health Board (ANHB)¹ is writing to you concerning Senate Bill 56 to extend the COVID-19 public health disaster emergency in Alaska.

We are writing to urge the Senate to reconsider the referral to the Senate Labor & Commerce Committee for this bill. While we understand the importance of proper review of legislation during ordinary times, our current moment is extraordinary. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has required quick action to respond to the crisis. This is also true of the necessary legislative response.

Our state's Alaska Native population has borne the brunt of the pandemic, with many communities lacking proper water and sanitation, removed from higher levels of care, and vulnerable to the disease once it arrives. Alaska Natives and American Indians make up nearly 40% of all Alaska deaths from COVID-19.² Without the continuation of the State PHE, we risk losing the ability to respond expeditiously to new variants of COVID-19 as they enter Alaska and to equitably distribute the COVID-19 vaccines that are helping our state get back to normal.

Therefore, we urge the Senate to reconsider the referrals of Senate Bill 56 in recognition of the extraordinary circumstances we continue to live and operate under for the people of Alaska, and the need for swift legislative action before Governor Dunleavy's disaster declaration expires on February 14, 2021.

Sincerely,

Andrew Jimmie, Tribally-Elected Leader of the Village of Minto
Chairman
Alaska Native Health Board

CC: Chairwoman Mia Costello, Senate Labor & Commerce Committee
Co-Chairman Click Bishop, Senate Finance Committee
Co-Chairman Bert Stedman, Senate Finance Committee
Chairman David Wilson, Senate Health & Social Services Committee
Chairman Gary Stevens, Senate Rules Committee

ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL
HEALTH CONSORTIUM

ALEUTIAN PRIBILOF
ISLANDS ASSOCIATION

ARCTIC SLOPE
NATIVE ASSOCIATION

BRISTOL BAY AREA
HEALTH CORPORATION

CHICKALOON VILLAGE
TRADITIONAL COUNCIL

CHUGACHMIUT

COPPER RIVER
NATIVE ASSOCIATION

COUNCIL OF ATHABASCAN
TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

EASTERN ALEUTIAN TRIBES

KARLUK IRA
TRIBAL COUNCIL

KENAI-TZE INDIAN TRIBE

KETCHIKAN
INDIAN COMMUNITY

KODIAK AREA
NATIVE ASSOCIATION

MANILAQ ASSOCIATION

METLAKATLA INDIAN
COMMUNITY

MT. SANFORD
TRIBAL CONSORTIUM

NATIVE VILLAGE
OF EKLUTNA

NATIVE VILLAGE OF EYAK

NATIVE VILLAGE
OF TYONEK

NINILCHIK
TRADITIONAL COUNCIL

NORTON SOUND
HEALTH CORPORATION

SELDOVIA VILLAGE TRIBE

SOUTHCENTRAL
FOUNDATION

SOUTHEAST ALASKA REGIONAL
HEALTH CONSORTIUM

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE

YAKUTAT TLINGIT TRIBE

YUKON-KUSKOKWIM
HEALTH CORPORATION

VALDEZ NATIVE TRIBE

¹ ANHB was established in 1968 with the purpose of promoting the spiritual, physical, mental, social, and cultural well-being and pride of Alaska Native people. ANHB is the statewide voice on Alaska Native health issues and is the advocacy organization for the Alaska Tribal Health System (ATHS), which is comprised of tribal health programs that serve all of the 229 tribes and over 177,000 Alaska Native and American Indian (AN/AI) people throughout the state. As the statewide tribal health advocacy organization, ANHB helps Alaska's tribes and tribal programs achieve effective consultation and communication with state and federal agencies on matters of concern.

² Alaska Department of Health & Social Services, COVID-19 Data Hub. Accessed (<https://alaska-coronavirus-vaccine-outreach-alaska-dhss.hub.arcgis.com/datasets/table-3-demographic-distribution-of-confirmed-cases>).

Jody Simpson

From: Janice Sheufelt <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 04, 2021 11:44 AM
To: Sen. David Wilson
Subject: Disaster Declaration

Dear Senator Wilson,

I am a family physician in Juneau.

I urge support for SB 56, it is imperative for the disaster declaration to be extended.

The disaster declaration has allowed nursing homes to be able to continue functioning effectively. Also, the declaration is essential to allowing people with opioid use disorder to be able to access care.

Thank you,

Janice Sheufelt, MD



KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH

1900 First Avenue Ste 210 • KETCHIKAN, ALASKA 99901

• 907/228-6625 • fax 907/228-6684

www.kgbak.us

OFFICE OF THE BOROUGH MANAGER

February 5, 2021

Honorable Senator David Wilson
Chair of the Senate Health and Social Services Committee
Alaska State Senate
Email: Senator.David.Wilson@akleg.gov

RE: In Support of an Extended Disaster Declaration

Senator Wilson:

The Ketchikan Gateway Borough has endeavored to protect the community and its residents throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and has worked closely with the State of Alaska to reopen our economy. The State's declaration of emergency has provided the Borough with the ability to utilize services and programs that may not be otherwise available.

This office appreciates the Legislature's interest in and commitment to clarifying the roles and responsibilities of decision-makers during a disaster. The past efforts made to protect public health, both in the form of mandates and guidance, effectively flattened the curve and preserved hospital and healthcare capacity, as they were intended. The Legislature will have an important role in continuing the recovery in Alaska.

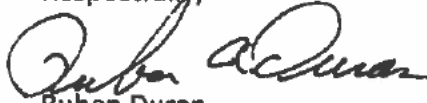
While the vaccination program is being rolled out throughout the state, the pandemic has not subsided. It remains incumbent on all levels of government to work together to get through this public health emergency and economic disaster. We hope that the Legislature will work together with the Administration and local governments to continue to meet this threat.

This community and all of Alaska needs a disaster declaration – or the necessary statutory authorities, including to waive procurement and regulatory restrictions or timelines as articulated in AS 26.23.020(g) – in place, allowing the State to continue to respond to the public health emergency. Important in the declaration is access to AS 26.23, Alaska's Disaster Act – we believe that Sections 2 and 3 are the relevant elements of the bill. Additional aspects of the bill, or other issues related to disaster response, could be taken up as next steps. Given the projected vaccination schedule for Alaska, the extension may need to go through September of 2021.

As the Borough Manager, I commend the work of the Legislature, in its continued effort to keep Alaska residents safe and to rebuild our economy. I encourage you to pass legislation to extend

the emergency declaration and assist us with keeping our residents safe and aiding with the rebuilding of our economy.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ruben Duran", written in a cursive style.

Ruben Duran

Borough Manager

Ketchikan Gateway Borough

cc: Senator Bert Stedman, District R

Jody Simpson

From: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 10:59 AM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: FW: I support extending the governor's COVID EO

From: Vijay Patil <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 4, 2021 10:16 AM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov>
Subject: I support extending the governor's COVID EO

Dear Senator Hughes,

I would like you to know that I fully support the Governor's plan to extend the covid-19 state of emergency for another month. As I understand it, the emergency order provides a legal basis for critical public health interventions including inter and intrastate travel restrictions and testing requirements. According to sources quoted in ADN this morning, it also gives hospitals and healthcare providers the flexibility and logistical support to deal with surging hospitalization rates. Most importantly, emergency status helps ensure an efficient vaccine rollout that is coordinated at the state level, which is our best tool for bringing this pandemic to an end and getting our lives back to normal. All of these benefits help to explain why healthcare organizations like the Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association support the EO extension.

Alaska has been fortunate to have one of the lowest COVID-19 mortality rates in the country. But the evidence clearly shows that our success has been due to a strong, coordinated government response. We only have to look at states like South Dakota, which has lost 1 in every 500 residents to Covid over the last year, or countries like Sweden, which is in the midst of a deadly second wave, to see how disastrous it can be to rely on low population density, personal responsibility and a dream of herd immunity. The supposed economic benefits of light-touch covid restrictions have also failed to materialize. Sweden has seen roughly the same amount of economic contraction as its nordic neighbors despite suffering a mortality rate that is many times higher, which may explain why their government recently amended their laws to allow for more restrictive lockdown regulations. I cannot understand why you and other State Senators are pushing so hard for our government to move in the other direction.

On a personal note, I am happy to hear that you are fully recovered from your own bout with covid. When you talk about the idea of post-infection immunity in public, I wish you would acknowledge the research showing that protection from reinfection is incomplete and temporary at best (maybe no more than a few months, even without accounting for the new strains cropping up). I'd also like to encourage you to continue wearing your mask when speaking to the public. As you know, you set a strong example for the people you represent, and your public support for masks in all public/shared spaces will help save lives.

Sincerely,
Vijay Patil

Jody Simpson

From: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 11:00 AM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: FW: SB 56

From: ENERGY RATINGS INC ALASKA PROFESSIONAL [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 4, 2021 8:25 AM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB 56

Senator Hughes,

This is to voice my support for extending the state's emergency covid order.

Officials need the flexibility to set policy that will keep Alaskan's safe. The new variants of the virus are yet to come and may require more extreme measures.

The virus is still here, the vaccinations won't be completed for months and it would be foolish to let down our guard at this point.

Just because you and others in the Senate don't feel a need to wear a mask to help protect your fellow Alaskan's don't handicap our fight against the virus by ending the emergency early.

Jeff Jenkins
Wasilla, AK

Jody Simpson

From: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 11:01 AM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: FW: Support Senate Bill 56

From: Elizabeth Dahl [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 5, 2021 3:01 AM
To: Elizabeth Dahl <elizabethdahl.alaska@gmail.com>
Subject: Support Senate Bill 56

Dear Senate Health and Social Services Committee:

I am a contact tracer for our state. I wholeheartedly support passage of Senate Bill 56 which enables continuation of the state's Covid-19 Public Health Emergency declaration.

In fact, I would like to see it amended to be valid through January 30, 2022 so there will be no gap should the current Pandemic situation continue to warrant the bill's need while the Legislature is not in session.

As you know, several of the state's health outbreak orders regarding travel, the seafood industry, healthcare, and essential workers have been integral to limiting the spread.

In spite of the arrival of the vaccine, it is predicted Alaska's future Covid-19 case numbers will rise again with the onset of in-person school, summer fish season and tourism. Nonetheless we are already encountering recovered Alaskan's that have become re-infected.

If you personally are not in favor of this legislation, I ask you to set those reservations aside in committee, move the bill forward and allow your opposition to be known on the Senate floor during a whole Senate vote.

Please don't let politics influence Public Health decisions or make an already difficult situation become more complicated. Be a part of the solution, not an obstruction to Alaska managing this critical public health emergency.

Thank you for listening,
Elizabeth Dahl
Juneau, Alaska

Jody Simpson

From: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 11:01 AM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: FW: SB 56

-----Original Message-----

From: Christy Kramer <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, February 4, 2021 5:10 PM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB 56

Senator Hughes ,

I am writing to you to express my support of SB 56. As a nurse practitioner working in the intensive care unit, I see first hand how important this bill is to Alaskans. An extension of the public health disaster declaration will continue to allow for essential health care to be delivered during the pandemic. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Best regards,

Christine Kramer
[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99516

Sent from my iPhone

Jody Simpson

From: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 11:02 AM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: FW: Extend the CoVid Emergency Declarationn

-----Original Message-----

From: Hammaker [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 4, 2021 3:19 PM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov>
Subject: Extend the CoVid Emergency Declarationn

Senator Huges,

Please extend the State's CoVid Disaster Declaration; this meets a Medicaid/Medicare requirement that loosens the telemedicine requirements and has allowed my wife (a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner) to continue necessary services to her clients. Without this loosening or requirements for telemedicine many of her clients would not have the type of cell phones required nor does she have the necessary office equipment (quite expensive) to continue those services. Concurrently, her office is too small for her to maintain safe distances.

Thanks for your consideration,
Robert Hammaker
Palmer

Jody Simpson

From: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 11:03 AM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: FW: Testimony for extending Covid Disaster Declaration
Attachments: TESTIMONY FOR SENATE JUDICIARY re Disaster Declaration.doc

From: Stuart Thompson [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 4, 2021 3:11 PM
To: Senate Judiciary <Senate.Judiciary@akleg.gov>
Cc: senator.mike.showers@akleg.gov; Sen. Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov>; Rep. David Eastman <Rep.David.Eastman@akleg.gov>; senator.laura.wrangell@akleg.gov
Subject: Testimony for extending Covid Disaster Declaration

Legislators:

Please see attached testimony that was thwarted at the last moment because of cancellation of public testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee for its meeting this Friday.

It contains AK statute and constitution based recommendations relevant to carrying out your duties.

Respectfully,

Stuart Thompson
Citizen District 10

**TESTIMONY FOR SENATE JUDICIARY
DISASTER DECLARATION EXTENTIONS RE COVID**

To the Committee via the Chairman, thank you for permitting testimony. I am Stuart Thompson, a district 10 citizen, speaking for myself. Start of my prepared testimony:

I recommend you authorize at least another 30 day extension of the COVID disaster declaration, provided the Governor does the following:

1. Comply with Disaster Act Section 26.23.150 and provide the Legislature with law-making recommendations for "the prevention or reduction of the harmful consequences" of COVID. He should have done this last summer--- instead of retaining his Disaster Act power of nullifying any Alaska law so long.
2. Call a special session just for the Legislature to use its lawmaking power to develop and provide constitutionally orthodox law for effectively dealing with COVID. He should of done this last summer---instead of letting an emergency delude him into thinking the executive Branch is competent to direct long term legal guidance for Alaskans on anything. The vulnerability of an executive (engaged in making the law as well as enforcing it) to manipulation by special interests is historically well known.
3. Direct all public officials to restudy US Constitution Amendment 10, and AK Constitution Article 12 Section 14 to be prepared to defend the Alaska Constitution and the Alaskan people from unsuitable/improper federal government overreach.

In my opinion, measures (like widespread lockdowns) based on scientific guesses(not true verified facts)--that commercial and political special interests support by suppressing scientific dissent---are the most destructive and incompetent government actions ever enforced on the Alaskan people. The excuse that such mistreatment is for public safety is sanctimonious hypocrisy. For example, Alaskan deaths from causes related to alcohol abuse yearly average over 50% more than Alaskan COVID deaths so far---by published state statistics. In this crisis, the full power of using the help of Alaskans---literate and basic level scientists from public education---has been unconstitutionally neglected (AK Constitution Article I, Sections 1 & 2). Where is a state-funded electronic bulletin board (to bypass problems with enforcing the 1st Amendment on private media companies) for Alaskans to be briefed on all proposals, their factual basis, and any dissent for study, and for judging what their will is for harvest by legislators? I am offended by repudiation of our political heritage in favor of "benevolent" rule of men (not rule of law) by government officials.

I petition you to use our constitutions as tools to resolve the problems facing Alaskans and lead us to victory over all threats.

Stuart Thompson



lookitover@att.net

Jody Simpson

From: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 12:55 PM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: FW: SB56

From: Tam Agosti-Gisler [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 5, 2021 12:09 PM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov>
Subject: SB56

February 5, 2021

The Honorable Senator Hughes
Alaska State Capitol
120 4th Street Rm 3
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Hughes:

Please vote for the extension of COVID-19 emergency orders in SB 56. It's vital that we continue many aspects of the pandemic response, i.e. airport traveler testing, seafood industry protocols, increased hospital capacity and allowing deployment of all means, even the Alaska National Guard if necessary, in order to give vaccines. Please don't undermine the progress Alaska has made all these long months to mitigate this pandemic.

Sincerely,

Tam Agosti-Gisler
[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99508

Jody Simpson

From: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 12:59 PM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: FW: Emergency Extension Order

From: Connie Fredenberg <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, February 5, 2021 9:39 AM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov>
Subject: Emergency Extension Order

Dear Representative Hughes,

I beg you to think like a mother, a good neighbor, and an educated woman when considering your vote on the Emergency Extension Order.

This is not about free speech or stealing anyone's freedom. This is about doing the right thing at the right time. Following CDC guidelines is a smart thing to do. Refusing to follow the guidelines for some ideological reason is not a smart thing to do.

Don't follow Representative Laura Reinbold down some rabbit hole. I honestly believe that woman should see a therapist, something does not compute in her world. And wear a mask! Don't put yourself in danger or anyone else in the House.

Do the right thing for your friends and neighbors. Do the right thing for Alaska. Extend the Emergency Order through September 2021.

Sincerely,

Connie Fredenberg

Connie Fredenberg

Utility Management Assistance aka UMA
[REDACTED]

NATIVE VILLAGE OF KONGIGANAK

Kongiganak Traditional Council

**P. O. Box 5069
Kongiganak, Alaska 99545
(907) 557-5225/5226
Fax (907) 557-5224**

February 4, 2021

The Honorable David Wilson
Chairman, Senate Health & Social Services Committee
Alaska Senate
State Capitol Room 121
Juneau, AK 99801
Via Email: Senator.David.Wilson@akleg.gov

RE: Senate Bill 56 to Extend the COVID-19 Public Health Disaster Emergency

Dear Chairman Wilson,

The extension of the public health disaster emergency (PHE) is vital for administrative, regulatory, and statutory flexibilities that have allowed Alaska to respond quickly and successfully to the COVID-19 pandemic. Alaska is leading the way in responding to the pandemic and it is vital that we continue to do so. The Kongiganak Traditional Council are writing in support of Senate Bill 56 and its swift passage to continue these flexibilities.

Native Village of Kongiganak

The State's PHE has allowed for a series of flexibilities that have allowed for Governor Dunleavy's administration, specifically the Department of Health & Social Services and the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, as well as health care providers and facilities to respond effectively to COVID-19. A few of the important flexibilities made available by the PHE are:

- **Vaccine distribution** – The powers authorized under the State PHE allow the governor to control the distribution of scarce resources, including scarce COVID-19 vaccines. Without the State PHE, the Department of Health and Social Services will not be able to distribute the COVID-19 vaccine using the State Vaccination Distribution Plan which prioritizes vulnerable populations, such as our Elders and our first responders.
- **Vaccine administration** – The State PHE does not just support the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines, it also provides essential flexibility to allow more provider types to be able to administer vaccines. This includes the ability to deploy the Alaska National Guard for contact tracing efforts and vaccine administration.

- **Provider licensing flexibilities** – Under the PHE, providers have received expedited, limited-use licenses that have reinforced Alaska’s health care workforce during a time of severe strain. Alaska has fewer health care professionals per capita than most states, and there was a chronic need for providers in Alaska even before the pandemic.
- **Telehealth provision and reimbursement** – The State’s PHE also allows patients to see providers for telehealth services without first having an in-person visit. This has been important to keep patients and providers safe during the pandemic, but it has also allowed providers to bill third party payors, providing much needed funding to clinics who have seen patient visits decline dramatically during the pandemic.
- **Continued provision of medication assisted treatment for patients with substance use disorders** – 12 AAC 40.943 allows a provider to see and prescribe controlled substances used as part of medication assisted treatment for substance use disorders via telemedicine during a declared disaster emergency without conducting required in-person exams. This flexibility has been used by rural providers to ensure patients do not have to go without treatment and can remain safe during the pandemic.
- **Alternate Care Sites** – The State’s PHE has been a vital component for standing up Alternate Care Sites (ACS) used for testing and treating patients for COVID-19 in non-traditional locations based on their clinical needs. For example, this flexibility allowed the State to establish a field hospital in King Salmon during the fishing season to help ensure local providers had the staffing and capacity to identify and treat COVID-19 in migrant workers. Generally, it has allowed for hospitals to establish an ACS that separates COVID-19 related care and treatment from non-COVID-19 care, keeping patients and providers safe.
- **Quarantining Sites** – The State PHE also has made it possible to quickly stand up Quarantining Sites for COVID-19 patients during their isolation period. Without the State PHE, it would become significantly more difficult to stand these sites up, especially in our rural hub communities. This flexibility also supports local hospitality businesses which have suffered greatly due to decreased tourism during the pandemic.
- **Travel** – The State PHE also made it possible to limit travel to Alaska and to our vulnerable rural, remote communities. These limitations have continued to protect rural communities in Alaska, especially those with community-based water and sanitation facilities, which face an increased risk of community-based transmission. Many of our rural communities cannot access the treatment options available at acute care facilities in a timely manner, making prevention from exposure to COVID-19 vital to individual and public health.

The State’s PHE and flexibilities are distinct from the public health powers of local governments and the federal government, but necessary to allow the State to respond effectively to the pandemic. We urge swift passage of Senate Bill 56 by the Alaska State Legislature.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact Tribal Administrator at kong.tribe@gmail.com or (907) 557-5226.

Sincerely,



Joseph Joseph, KTC President

CC: Senate Health & Social Services Committee Members
Alaska Senate
Alaska House of Representatives



By Email Only:

sen.david.wilson@akleg.gov

jody.simpson@akleg.gov

February 5, 2021

Senator David Wilson, Chair,
Senate Health and Social Services Committee
State of Alaska
State Capitol Room 121
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: City of Dillingham Support for SB56

Dear Senator Wilson:

The City of Dillingham, Alaska supports SB56, proposed legislation to extend the Governor's current emergency declaration. The current declaration is presently set to expire on February 14, 2021 at 11:59pm. SB56 would generally extend the declaration to September 2021. I understand that the Alaska Municipal League has provided testimony detailing many of the harmful consequences to Alaska municipalities if the declaration expires and will not repeat those here.

Alaska, and the City of Dillingham, need a State of Alaska disaster declaration allowing the State to continue to respond to the current Covid-19 public health emergency. This allows the State to be responsive to the crisis in working closely with local governments. Indeed, it also allows for close cooperation between all levels of government while action remains independent.

Further, the declaration provides the infrastructure necessary to respond. It doesn't require response, only allows for it. The declaration doesn't restrict – it removes restrictions that allow the State to act effectively.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Alice Ruby
Mayor

CITY OF CORDOVA



By Email

sen.david.wilson@akleg.gov

jody.simpson@akleg.gov

February 5, 2021

Senator David Wilson, Chair,
Senate Health and Social Services Committee
State Capitol Room 121
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: City of Cordova Support for SB56

Dear Senator Wilson:

As City of Cordova does all it can to mitigate the impacts of Covid-19 in our community, we have relied on the State of Alaska and its declaration of emergency to provide a foundation for our local response and to give best practice guidance to our efforts.

City of Cordova strongly supports SB56, the proposed legislation to extend the Governor's current emergency declaration. Our City Council has elected to follow the lead of State but is NOT prepared to discard the very critical mandates, rules and flexibility that allow our City government to quickly respond to the ever-changing threat and impacts of Covid-19.

Allowing the State declaration of emergency to expire on February 14th flies in the face of health recommendations from CDC and the state's very own Covid-19 and DHSS team. This action has the potential to undermine all the efforts we have put in place to protect our citizens, and to set back the gains we have made to defeat this virus in Alaska. We all want to return our lives to normal but not extending the health emergency is very premature.

Alaskan communities and citizens need the State of Alaska's disaster declaration to allow for a statewide response coordinated between all levels of government, and to access resources and infrastructure to respond to the virus. With Covid-19, quick action and nimbleness is required. The State Declaration of Emergency removes restrictions to allow the State and local governments to act with urgency.

Please re-consider supporting SB56.

Sincerely,

Helen Howarth
City Manager, City of Cordova